

REPORT

OF THE

SPEECHES & PROCEEDINGS

AT A

SPECIAL MEETING

OF THE

Mercantile Library Association of Montreal,

HELD ON

MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 8, 1850,

TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ACTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTION IN RESPECT
TO THE EXPULSION OF THE

“CHRISTIAN INQUIRER”

FROM THE

NEWS ROOM.

Montreal:

PRINTED BY JAMES POTTS, HERALD OFFICE.

1850.

A
020.6
M76

REPORT

Of a Special Meeting of the Worcester Library Association of March 21st, 1894
by the President in compliance with a resolution from the Association
held in the Macedonian Hall on Monday Evening, the 21st of March, 1894.

The President, Mr. Theodore Tarron, took the Chair about 8 o'clock P. M. and called the meeting to order. Mr. Tarron then read the resolution, and in doing so stated that the object of the meeting was "to take into consideration the action of the Worcester Library Association in respect to the expulsion of the Librarian, and to consider the propriety of the New Room." He urged members to come and forward to support the proposition in a kind spirit; to avoid theoretical discussion, and all selfish remarks. He urged that the meeting would advance the interests of the Association, and called upon the Librarian to bring forward the business which the meeting had been convened to consider.

Mr. S. Baxter Tarron, and said—Librarian, and said—The Secretary to read the various resolutions passed by the Board of Directors respecting the Librarian. I wish to remark, that whatever may be the result of this meeting, Librarian, I am not prepared to stand by the Association, and I believe that those who are acting with an unscrupulous selfish sentiment and will not deny that Librarian, in event of an adverse verdict, which I do not believe will not deny that Librarian, I hold in my hand official copies of some of the resolutions, but I believe it will be more correct, that I should read them and more carefully study in resolutions which official stipulate and prohibited copies for you. Mr. Tarron to read the resolutions to read from the Minutes of the Association, passed by the Board in respect to the matter we have met to consider. I therefore now call upon you, Sir, to direct the Secretary to read the resolutions—reading the newspaper from the New Room, which was passed by the Board of Directors in December, and also the resolution of the existing Board holding it "unscrupulous" regarding the newspaper into the Association, and I must further remark that the Secretary will read the resolution of the Board, by which it was determined to recommend to reject the proposed Librarian, and all other action of the Board and the Association.

The Librarian—Librarian, I wish to read the report which the Secretary will now read and appointed a Committee to draw up a report which the Secretary will now read to receive it; we have not met for this purpose; we are not organized to receive it to an address, but to arrive at the source and understand truth. The Librarian will have an opportunity to explain their conduct in the course of the debate. I can verily give reasons for the Librarian's action, and I think the members of the Association they were not satisfied, but it is due to the Librarian to let them hear the reasons.

The Librarian—I think the report will be the most convenient way of doing it.

Mr. Tarron—I would prefer the resolution as the Librarian.

Secretary—Read from their names. The report will be found in the Minutes.

J. A. Dyer, Esquire, I agree with Mr. Tarron. I know nothing of the matter.

Report may be made by the Librarian, and I think the meeting is entitled to the Librarian from the Minutes.

John Tarron, Esquire—I am recommending the Librarian to the Association of the Association.

Report is made by the Librarian. The Librarian's committee will be found in the Minutes.

Secretary—The Librarian's report will be found in the Minutes.

Mr. Tarron—I wish to read the report which the Secretary will now read.

Secretary—Read from their names. The report will be found in the Minutes.

Report may be made by the Librarian, and I think the meeting is entitled to the Librarian from the Minutes.

John Tarron, Esquire—I am recommending the Librarian to the Association of the Association.

Report is made by the Librarian. The Librarian's committee will be found in the Minutes.

REPORT

Of a Special Meeting of the Mercantile Library Association of Montreal, convened by the President in compliance with a requisition from thirty-nine members, and held in the Rhecabite Hall, on Monday Evening, the 8th of April, 1850.

THE President, Mr. THEODORE LYMAN, took the Chair about 8 o'clock, P. M., and called the meeting to order. Mr. Lyman then read the requisition, and briefly explained that the object of the meeting was "to take into consideration the action of the Board of Direction in respect to the expulsion of the *Christian Inquirer* newspaper from the News Room." He urged members to bear and forbear; to conduct the proceedings in a kind spirit; to avoid theological discussion, and all offensive remarks. He hoped that the Meeting would advance the interests of the Association, and called upon the Requisitionists to bring forward the business which the meeting had been convened to consider.

Mr. S. LESTER TAYLOR rose, and said—Before I call upon the Secretary to read the various resolutions passed by the Board of Direction respecting the *Christian Inquirer* newspaper, I wish to remark, that whatever may be the result of this night's deliberation, I, for one, am prepared to stand firmly by the Association, and I believe that those who are acting with me entertain similar sentiments, and will not desert the Institution, in event of an adverse verdict, which I do not, cannot, and will not apprehend. I hold in my hand official copies of some of the resolutions, but I believe it will be more correct, more business like and more satisfactory, more in accordance with official etiquette and established usage, for you, Mr. President, to request the Secretary to read from the Minute Book, the resolutions passed by the Board in respect to the matter we have met to consider. I therefore now call upon you, Sir, to direct the Secretary to read the resolution expelling the newspaper from the News Room, which was passed by the late Board of Direction in December, and also the resolution of the existing Board deeming it "inexpedient" to receive the newspaper into the Room; and I must further request that the Secretary will read the resolution of the late Board, by which it was deliberately determined to receive this proscribed journal, and all other action of the Board touching it.

THE PRESIDENT—Anticipating this call, the Directors met on last Monday Evening, and appointed a Committee to draw up a report, which the Secretary will now read.

Mr. TAYLOR—I must object to the reception of this report. We are not competent to receive it; we have not met for that purpose; we are not assembled to receive a reply to an Address, but to arrive at the simple and unadorned truth. The Directors will have an opportunity to explain their conduct in the course of the debate. They can verbally give reasons for the faith that is in them, and inform the members by what motives they were actuated, but it is due to the members to let them hear the naked resolutions read.

THE PRESIDENT—I think the Report will be the most convenient way of bringing the matter before the meeting.

Mr. TAYLOR—I would prefer the resolutions by themselves.

SEVERAL DIRECTORS from their seats. The Report will be found satisfactory.

J. J. DAY, Esquire—I agree with Mr. Taylor. I know nothing respecting the merits of this business, and wish to first be put in possession of the simple facts. The Report may prejudice the matter, and I think the meeting is entitled to the resolutions from the Minute Book.

JOHN LEEMING, Esquire—I see no reasonable objections to the reception of the Report, if it embodies all the resolutions. Does it contain them all? If it does not, we had better have them read.

SEVERAL DIRECTORS—It contains the substance of all the resolutions, and was drawn up by a Committee, and afterwards approved of by the Directors.

Mr. TAYLOR—We do not want the substance. People differ as to what constitutes the substance of a resolution. If the resolutions are read, each member can judge of the substance for himself. I must again, Mr. President, urge my request.

The President gave the requisite order, when the Recording Secretary read the following from the Book of Record:—

The first extract does not appear to have been recorded as a formal resolution, but as the record of a general agreement arrived at by the Board of Direction.

1849, Oct. 1st.—“The News Room Committee also reverted and submitted to the Board, a letter which the Superintendent had received from Mr. Benjamin Workman, presenting the Association in the name of the Rev. Mr. Corder, with a paper entitled the *Christian Inquirer*, for one year, upon which it was resolved to allow the paper to remain on the Table of the News Room, until the next meeting of the Board, when it should be re-considered.”

1849, Nov. 5th.—It was moved and carried—“That the Corresponding Secretary be instructed to intimate to Benjamin Workman in reply to his letter, that the *Christian Inquirer* would be received and laid on the Table.”

1849, Dec. 3rd.—It was moved and carried—“That the members of the Board are of opinion that the *Christian Inquirer* should be no longer received into the Rooms, on account of the insidious tendency of the articles which are found in its columns.”

1849, Dec. 21st.—It was moved and carried—“That the Board are of opinion that under the present circumstances of the Association, it is considered inexpedient to receive the *Christian Inquirer* in its Rooms.”*

1850, April 1st.—It was moved and carried unanimously—“That the Board of Direction regret that the action of the preceding Board, with reference to the *Christian Inquirer*, should have wounded the feelings of any portion of the members of this institution, that although they are in no way responsible for any action of that Board, yet they cannot refrain from an expression of their opinion that such was not the purpose of their predecessors. At the same time they feel it to be their duty to represent to the members of the Association, that the action which the present Board took upon the matter, was dictated by a sincere desire for the welfare of the institution, based as it was upon the reasons conveyed in the resolutions passed at the Special Meeting of the Board, held on the 21st December last, to the effect that it was inexpedient to receive the paper.”

MR. TAYLOR—I regret, Sir, that there has been any necessity for this meeting. To strengthen, encourage and aid the Board in the performance of its duty, has ever been my study and wish; and I believe that members generally entertain the kindest sentiments towards the Directors, and wish to sustain them in whatever course they may determine upon. I have great pleasure in testifying to the zeal, energy, and general good management of the Board, who are, I am quite satisfied, actuated by a sincere desire to further the best interests of the Institution—and I do not desire to censure them or impugn their general management. I have, therefore, drawn my resolution so as to avoid censuring the Board, and have confined it to simple disapproval of certain resolutions that have been passed, and the affirmation of a broad and general principle. I believe, that those persons who expelled the *Christian Inquirer*, conceived that they were doing right. I do not question their sincerity; but I regard their zeal as mistaken, and their course intolerant. I do not wish to censure the Board, or to wound the feelings of any individual member of it; but I wish to relieve the Association from the odium resting upon it—to relieve the Board of Direction, and to place this intolerant action to the account of the fractional part of the Board by which it was passed. I am informed that the “insidious” resolution was passed at a meeting where only five persons besides the Chairman were present, and that it was carried by a bare majority. Now, Sir, there are fifteen Clerk and four Merchant Directors, and if my information be true, I am right in placing this great error, this injustice, to the account of a fractional part of the Board. I will now read the resolution, which Mr. Murray will second, and which, I hope, will be unanimously adopted. If it is defeated, I will move in this matter again at every convenient opportunity, and never cease to advocate it until toleration is secured, and the unsectarian character of the Association recognized. If defeated, I will be prepared to again battle for perfect mental freedom, which is the cause I now urge, until the victory is gained.

Mr. Taylor then read the following resolution:—

That this Association having considered the resolution passed by the late Board of Direction, on the 3rd of December last, and the resolution passed by the existing Board of Direction on the 21st of

* This resolution was communicated to Mr. Workman by the Secretary on the 12th January 1850, in the following words—“I am directed by the Board of Directors of the Mercantile Library Association to inform you, that they do not deem it expedient to receive the ‘*Christian Inquirer*’ for which you are Agent.”

December last—both having reference to the “*Christian Inquirer*” newspaper, disapprove of the sentiments contained therein, conceiving that differences of religious opinion should not be recognized in the Association, which is purely unsectarian in its foundation and aim.

Mr. TAYLOR.—I shall now, Mr. President, give a slight sketch of this affair, which I believe the members of the Board will pronounce correct as to its facts—

H. ALLAN, Esq., objected. He thought that as Mr. Taylor had refused to receive the Report of the Directors, he was not entitled to go into the history of the transactions.

Mr. TAYLOR.—I am speaking, Mr. President, to a resolution which I have read, and must follow my own opinion as to fitness of arguments, and adopt that line of argument which I deem best. So long as I am courteous in my language, (and I shall endeavour to be so) I shall expect you to shield me from interruption. I wish to give a brief history of this affair, in order to show that the injustice done by the fractional part of one Board has been sustained by another, and to rebut reports that have been industriously circulated respecting the introduction of the *Christian Inquirer* into the News Room. Some time in September last, the Rev. Mr. Corder, at the request of several members of his congregation who are members of this Association, who were not subscribers to the *Inquirer*, and who wished to see the paper: at their request, Mr. Corder subscribed for the newspaper, and requested the agent to present it in his name. This was done, and the Superintendent replied to Mr. Workman, stating that his letter would be laid before the Directors. This was in September, and was the last that Mr. Workman heard of the matter until December. It appears by the record which has been read, that at the meeting in October the Directors resolved to receive the paper in the meantime, and to determine what they would do in November. At that meeting they deliberately resolved to receive the *Inquirer*, and the Corresponding Secretary was specially directed to communicate the same to Mr. Workman. That communication was never received. Was a letter ever written? The letter book will shew; but I am afraid there has been some negligence. In December the Board again met, and then expelled the *Inquirer*, on the ground that the tendency of its articles were “insidious”. It would have been difficult for any man to have drawn up a more offensive resolution, than that passed by the Board and communicated to Mr. Workman. It was passed, too, in a most extraordinary manner. At the last meeting of the old Board, when few Directors were present, when the Board had not above three minutes to live, on the night of the general election, the parties who had pursued this newspaper with a zeal worthy of a better cause, again brought it up, and although the President implored them not to fetter their successors, they voted the resolution through by a bare majority, and bequeathed to their successors a most troublesome legacy. I think the resolution was illegal—I know it to have been unjust. Although there may not be any special rule directing that notice of intended resolutions shall be given, it was the custom when I sat on the Board, and the custom before I sat there, to give notice of all important resolutions, so that members might turn them over in their minds, and be present if they thought fit. Under any circumstances, I hold that notice should have been given, but considering that the Directors had but three minutes to live, I think they could have employed their time more profitably than in bequeathing this troublesome legacy to their successors. The President implored them to pause and to refuse to act in the matter, but his excellent advice was not heeded. There was an opportunity to pass the resolution and brand a class of religionists, and pass it must. It was passed, and duly communicated to Mr. Workman. He replied to it in a kind and gentle tone, requesting the Board to reconsider their resolution. This letter was acknowledged by the Secretary of the new Board in December, and in January he informed Mr. Workman that the Board did not conceive it “expedient” to take his paper. In plain terms the new Board sanctioned the resolution passed by the old. I am informed that a majority of the Directors condemned the language of the resolution passed by the old Board, but they did not even apologize for it or express their condemnation of it, and it is with facts that we have to deal—not opinions. But had there been an ample apology, I would have assumed the same position that I occupy now. It is never expedient to be unjust, and in this case a palpable injustice has been committed. The resolution passed by the Board of Direction on the 1st of April is no apology—remedies no injustice. It was not adopted until after the notice convening this meeting had appeared in the public prints. It has never been promulgated, and I am not aware that it has ever been communicated to the parties insulted. (The President said it had not been.) Mr. Taylor,—It is therefore worth just as much as so much blank paper, and no more. But even if it had

been communicated and promulgated, it would have left the injustice untouched. We have proscribed and insulted a religious sect, because they dare differ in opinion from us. It has been said that they are trying to "force" the paper on the Room. This is not true; it is not sustained by the facts. I have already sketched the history of this matter up to January, and I may mention that although Mr. Workman was urged by Trinitarians to expose the Board, he refused to do so, fearing that publicity would injure the Association, and it was only through an ordinary business letter written about the 1st of March, that the matter became public. Mr. Workman was remitting money to the publisher, and in directing the stoppage of the paper presented to the Association, he enclosed a copy of the resolution. Upon this resolution the newspaper commented, and the unfortunate action of the Board became generally known to the people of this city. I did not know of it until then, and I believe that most members of the Association were as ignorant as myself. At the last Annual Meeting an attempt to bring this matter before the Association (at least so I am informed) was made by a member who was aware of the action of the Directors, but he failed to make the audience generally comprehend what he was driving at. Some suspected his motives—others wished a special meeting convened—it was late at night, the members were uneasy and would not listen to any speech. I think that the plain facts which I have advanced will justify me in saying that under the circumstances, the Unitarians have shewn great consideration. The charge of trying to "force" the paper on the Institution, will not stand investigation. But who makes this charge? Who talks about "forcing"? Does it not come from the "head and front" of, or from gentlemen deeply interested in the French Canadian Missionary Society—who are engaged in forcing—

Here there were loud cries of *order*, and the President expressed an opinion that Mr. Taylor was going beyond the fair limits of debate.

Mr. TAYLOR—All I desire is to show that this charge of "forcing" comes with an ill grace from the parties who make it, and that it is untrue. All religious sects are anxious to proselytize, and this is not to be wondered at, for when a man really feels his belief to be sounder than that held by his neighbour, it is natural that he should seek to convert him. We see this every day, in the efforts of Roman Catholics to convert Protestants, and of Protestants to convert Catholics. We see it in the proceedings of the various Protestant sects. I do not disapprove of the spirit, which grows out of zeal; but I wish members to bear in mind that Unitarians should be tested by the same standard as other denominations. I do not think that the religious papers taken into the News Room are read by many members: none are compelled to read them. Those who do not approve of the *Inquirer* can pass it by, they are not forced to read it, nor does the Association pay for it as it does for all the sectarian papers. The *Inquirer* cannot be more offensive to the members generally, than the *Melanges Religieux* is to Protestants, or the *Witness* to Catholics, or the *Church* to Dissenters. I wish it to be understood that I use the term Dissenter in a descriptive and not in an offensive sense, for I do not hold, although a Churchman, that every body who dissents from me is wicked and heretical, or beyond the pale of the true Church. None of these religious journals are offensive to me. I can read them all without being excited by anger, for although I may not approve of much that I see in them, I believe they are conducted by good and zealous men who are, in their own way anxious to spread abroad that knowledge which we shall all find in the end the most valuable.

I wish now, Sir, to glance at the history of this Association, and shew how deeply it is indebted to members of this proscribed sect. I regret that the old Minute Book has been lost, but I appeal to you Mr. President, to bear me out in the assertion, that the first meeting was convened by an Unitarian, that a very large proportionate majority, if not an actual majority of those present at the first meeting, were Unitarians. The members of this proscribed sect have always been the fast and true friends of the Association. To one Unitarian gentleman in particular, we are deeply indebted. He has been acknowledged in the reports as the founder of the Institution: he has contributed money and books; he has given much valuable time and excellent advice to the Association. To him we have applied when financial difficulties have thickened around us; to him we owe the present of books from the Harper's, the magnificent donation of French works from Mr. Bossange of Paris, and to him we owe one costly work, that is in itself almost a complete Library. The Record Book will bear out my assertions. It will shew too, that other Unitarians have been active. Turn up our list of Life Members: search the various subscription lists, and you will find that members of this proscribed sect have never been backward, have borne their full share of expense

and trouble when we have been in difficulties. The Association has delighted to place Unitarians in places of honor and trust; has been lavish in showering praises upon them; has been greedy to get their money. And now, what do we give in return for their acts of kindness and generosity? We refuse a place in the News Room for a Journal which they gratuitously present, and brand its doctrine as "insidious." I have already shewn that we have been unjust towards the Unitarians, and I must now say, that considering how much we owe to them, we are exhibiting the blackest ingratitude. Let us contrast the conduct of our Association, with the course pursued by a sister society in the United States—a society that is far more prosperous than ours—a society that rejoices in 1700 members—a society that possesses a proprietary interest of ten thousand dollars in a splendid building, and a society that owns one of the most magnificent libraries on this continent. I refer to the Mercantile Library Association of Cincinnati, in whose last Annual Report I observe a glowing eulogy on the late Rev. Mr. Perkins, an Unitarian Clergyman to whom they were much indebted. I may remark that I am acquainted with Cincinnati, which is made up of a great variety of sects, which is nearly three times as populous as Montreal, and in which the Unitarians are not as proportionately numerous as they are in Montreal. Mr. Perkins died last autumn, and his loss is mentioned in the Report in the following words. Mr. Taylor here began to read from the Report, and was interrupted by

Mr. HENRY LYMAN, who rose to order. He had not come there to hear an eulogy on Unitarianism, or Unitarians, or the Rev. Mr. Perkins. What Mr. Taylor was reading had nothing to do with the question before the meeting, and he must —

Mr. TAYLOR—I must call upon you Mr. President, to prevent these interruptions. The gentleman does not understand my argument. Perhaps he may have heard of contrast. I am endeavoring to make my argument powerful by contrast. I am endeavoring to shew that in a city where Unitarians are much less numerous in proportion than they are here that justice is done to them; that an Institution which is chiefly composed of Trinitarians does not brand the doctrines of those who differ from them in religious opinion, as "insidious." I wish to shew the unenviable position that we occupy before the world, and to impress members with the extreme narrowness that has been exhibited. I am not an Unitarian, and with the great cardinal feature in their creed, which distinguishes them from nearly all other religious sects, I have no sympathy whatever; but as I have before stated, I am prepared to do justice to all, and stand here to argue for perfect mental freedom. I am speaking to my own resolution, and trust that I shall be allowed to speak to it in my own way, and without interruption. Mr. Taylor here concluded reading the extract from the Report, and then remarked,—I had intended reading the resolution adopted by the general meeting of this body, but as the Pamphlet seems to trouble some persons, I will omit it, and content myself with saying that a highly eulogistic resolution on Mr. Perkins was moved at a full meeting by a staunch Trinitarian, with whom I have the honor of being acquainted—was adopted unanimously, and was placed on the permanent records of the Association. This is what was done in Cincinnati by a sister society. What have we done here?

This city, Sir, is peopled by men of different races and creeds. We differ much on political and religious topics, and here, above all other places, Christian charity should prevail. Our Protestant denominations are pretty equally divided, and interest should teach us to consent to differ. If we were all composed, or nearly all belonged to one sect, there might be more reason for discountenancing the views of a very small sect—though that would be neither just or generous—but as we appeal to all for support, we must be prepared to mete out to all without distinction, even handed justice. An Institution like this cannot flourish in our divided community if it exhibits the slightest sectarian taint. We must consent to differ, and we shall get along all the better for it.

If the principle which has been acted upon, is approved, I ask members where they will stop? We have expelled an Unitarian newspaper gratuitously presented. Shall we appoint an Ecclesiastical Commission to revise the Library? Shall we expel Channing, Gibbon, Hume and Bolingbroke? I find that we own the complete works of Rousseau, and among them is "Emilie" a work that I have never read, but I find by the Literary Gazetteer, that is so immoral in tone and obscene in language, that it was, by order of the authorities, publicly burned by the common hangman of Paris. We have the works of Frederick The Great, the friend and patron of Voltaire. Shall we expel them? We have the complete works of Voltaire, the most formidable opponent that Christianity ever encountered. Shall we expel his

works? I hope before they are expelled, that every member will read one of them—I refer to his Essay on Toleration. These works are much less dangerous than the Novels of Bulwer, and I do not wish to see them expelled. They treat chiefly of deep metaphysical questions, and are not much sought after. They do not go into the hands of the young, who are easily impressed. Pernicious novels do them much greater injury. I ask again, where shall we stop? We must draw the line somewhere. We have got rid of the *Inquirer*. Shall we next attack the *Malanges*, and then the *Church*, and then the *Witness*? Shall we go on until we get rid of all religious journals? Shall we copy our illustrious and patriotic ministry at Toronto, and proscribe the annexation journals? The *Witness* must fall first, as the first advocate of Annexation—next the *Herald*, and then the *Courier*. The Tory papers must come next, and then the Radical journals, and as each party gets uppermost, we will go on, until we have no newspapers whatever. Shall we do this? or shall we refuse to recognize political or religious differences, in this non-political and unsectarian Institution?

This Institution is chiefly composed of Protestants, and we talk a good deal about the absurd pretensions of the Romish Church to infallibility. We are all pretty much alike. The Church of Rome is infallible; we are always right. She cannot err; we never do. I think, upon the whole, that we, Protestants, have the advantage—for while we escape the odium of extreme and doubtful pretensions, we get the full credit of Divine inspiration. All Churches set up great claims; but it is gratifying to know that but few of their members feel disposed to carry out the exclusive views contained in the creeds and confessions of faith to which they subscribe. I give the members of the Board who voted for the expulsion of the *Inquirer* full credit for sincerity—they do not think that they are intolerant; but I am afraid that they are insensibly actuated by an intolerant spirit. I conceive that they have given a modified practical application to the same spirit that impelled pious and zealous Catholics to burn heretics; that made Protestants burn Catholics; that induced the Church to persecute Dissenters; that made the "Pilgrim Fathers", in their turn, burn and persecute Quakers and Witches. True religious liberty can only exist when men agree to judge their fellows by their acts, and not by their faith.

I had the pleasure of appearing before you in another capacity this winter—in the capacity of a lecturer—and I felt highly honoured by the invitation extended to me, and gratified by the manner in which my remarks were received. I endeavoured to prove, on that occasion, that there was nothing narrow, intolerant or sectarian in commerce; that it opened men's minds and gave them comprehensive and liberal views; that commercial men had been the pioneers of all great liberty movements; had been foremost in all good works; that they had been the first to rouse Europe to break the chains of the system that sunk the individual in the Church or State; that they were the true friends of freedom, and the sworn foes of tyranny. I flattered myself that I had succeeded in making out a strong case, and from your cheers I thought that you entertained the same opinion; but I must confess that I have doubts on that point now. May I not hope that you will show that you are actuated by the true commercial spirit—that you are liberal, enlightened and just, that you repudiate narrowness and intolerance. A circumstance applicable to this subject strikes me now, and I will remind you of it. You will remember that but a few years ago, in this Province of Lower Canada, none but the Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church and the Clergy of the Church of England, were entitled by law to marry the living, or bury the dead. A Legislature, chiefly composed of Roman Catholics, granted to all other denominations the privileges they enjoyed themselves. Shall we shew ourselves less liberal than they? Shall we refuse to others the rights which we claim for ourselves? I hope not.

We must remember that the Directors are trustees, not owners: managers for the time being, not actual proprietors, and if it be true as I am informed by many of them, that they wish to rescind the obnoxious resolutions, they will gladly embrace our suggestion to do so. They have now placed the expulsion of this newspaper on the ground of expediency, and if we declare it inexpedient to be unjust and sectarian, they will cheerfully obey our wishes. Let us give them that advice. Let us show by an unanimous vote that we are enlightened, tolerant; up to the age; as liberal as our neighbours; truly and purely commercial in our feelings. Let us show, that we can practice toleration; separate things having no natural connection; and can be generous and just. Let us stamp with reprobation the narrow and intolerant sentiments contained in the resolutions passed by the fractional part of the Board, and affirm the broad and comprehensive principle enunciated in the resolution which I have had the honor to propose, and which I will again read.

Mr. J. MURRAY.—Mr. President, I rise to second the resolution moved by Mr. Taylor. He has gone so fully into the subject, that I shall confine my remarks to a simple explanation of the manner in which the newspaper was introduced into the News Room. The paper was not forced on the institution by Unitarians. The circumstances were these. Sometime last summer,—in August I believe,—a member met me in the street and enquired of me why we had no Unitarian newspaper in the room as we had those of other denominations. I replied that the Association was too poor, upon which he asked if we would receive a newspaper provided it was gratuitously presented. I replied, that I did not think there would be any objections, that I had none, but that he must not receive my reply as official permission, which I suggested he should seek from the Board of Direction. Shortly after this conversation the *Christian Inquirer* was presented to the Association. I do not think that anything like a desire to force the paper on the institution has been exhibited by the Unitarians.

Mr. T. P. ROE.—Mr. President, we are met this evening not for the purpose of opening afresh, the wounds that trouble us, but for the avowed purpose of consulting the best interests of the Association, and in so doing it is clear to us all, that we must stifle some of our own feelings for the general good. If we expect to be borne with, we must on our part forbear, and not allow our prejudices to interfere with the carrying out of the object for which the Association was formed. I need not waste your time by pointing out the great benefit that we individually and as a community reap from the Mercantile Library Association, or the effect that the breaking up of it would cause. It is clear to all that this would be a great evil, and I am sure that you will all agree with me that any proposition "the adoption of which" would avert this dreaded catastrophe should meet with the cordial support of all the well wishers of this Association, of which I am happy to see not a few present. I have accordingly prepared an amendment, which will, I trust have the desired effect—that of pouring oil on the troubled waters, and again restoring that harmony which has, for a season, been interrupted. I beg to move, seconded by Mr. WINN:—

"That we deeply regret that a Resolution of the late Direction Board, hastily drawn up, not intended for publication, nor designed to have been sent to any one, should by inadvertent transmission have given cause of offence to some of the members and friends of our Association, and for the offence thus unintentionally given, we sincerely apologize. That we concur in the opinion of the present Directors that it is not expedient to add the "*Christian Inquirer*" to the number of newspapers received into our rooms."

The amendment is now before you, and I would earnestly implore all present to consider that the probable existence of the Association may depend upon its rejection or adoption.

Mr. WINN said he came forward after a long period, during which he had not appeared before the Association, to take part in warding a blow, which, if it took effect, might destroy the Institution. The feeling already excited was sufficient to convince any one, that unless this unfortunate business were gently handled, the Association might be expected to dwindle till it perhaps became extinct. It was not necessary to say anything to increase the warmth of feeling and cordiality entertained by every member of this body for the Institution. Nor was it necessary to dwell on the fact of its being highly calculated to build up and form an enlightened taste among the young men of the Library Association. The literary character of the city in fact depended upon this Institution. Those who moved that amendment, came forward with a desire to suppress all unkind feelings; not to advocate any intolerant views of their own; but to make peace between those who differed, and he would desire all to recollect, as religion had been spoken of, that the religion in which they all believed, pronounced a special blessing on the peacemakers. He would say nothing in disparagement of the excellent Mr. Perkins, on whom the mover had passed, he had no doubt, a well deserved eulogy; nor would he attempt to diminish the respect, which all felt for commercial pursuits. But he desired the Association to adopt such a view of this case as would end all hostility, and with this object, he came forward. What did the Board allege? They said that on the spur of the moment, individual members of the Board had drawn up the minute relative to this paper, which was never meant to be made public, and which, as gentlemen, they would have cut off their heads rather than have sent to wound the feelings of any professor of the Unitarian faith. The resolution, however, by mistake was sent to a gentleman holding that creed, who was the agent for the "*Christian Inquirer*," and he confessed, that that gentleman could not help considering it as a studied insult. But this having been done, should they now shirk the responsibility of the act,

or cast the entire blame on others. No, they came forward as men, as gentlemen, as christians, to bear their full share of the burden, and to tender an apology, such as must be satisfactory to any gentleman. They tendered the olive branch of peace; and in that same spirit they went on to the second part of the amendment. But it would perhaps be said, well, if you are willing to make peace, why not undo what you have done? That involved a different question. It was the introduction of this paper, which was the occasion of strife, and a large number of persons entertained the opinion that its continued reception would diminish the number of subscribers to the Association and be a continual source of ill feeling. It was replied, however, that on every principle of fair play, as other religious journals were taken, this should be taken also. But there were in Canada a considerable number of religious newspapers, and though some more generally sought for were taken, about three fourths of them were not taken. Why then should the smallest body of all make this bitter complaint? If these local papers were not taken, why should any one feel annoyed that a foreign journal was excluded?

A VOICE—Are they presented gratuitously?

Mr. WINN continued—The question of the paper being given certainly ought not to be taken into consideration. If its reception would lose subscribers, the Association would be the loser though they paid nothing to have the paper. But, as he was observing, as there was no local Unitarian organ there could be no cause of complaint. There were thirty or forty religious newspapers published in the United States, of which only one, which was the organ of several christian bodies was received; it was therefore most unreasonable to expect that a paper, the organ of the very smallest body should be taken, while the rest were excluded. He would appeal to the kindly feelings of gentlemen of the Unitarian faith—he would ask themselves—when the Board was ready to unsay what it had said to give offence, would they ask us to receive a paper the receiving of which would do mischief to the Institution?—Much had been said about intolerance; but he had long learned to appreciate loud talking of that kind at its worth. The more loudly the lion roared, the more certain was it that he was—you know what a lion's skin. Therefore he did not feel much hurt at imputations of bigotry and intolerance. If to do all he could to sustain the society was to be illiberal, he was illiberal; if to love peace were intolerant, he was intolerant; if to cherish a warm sense of the benefits of that Association were bigotry, he was a bigot.

Mr. ALEX. MORRIS confessed that he felt pleasure in seeing so large a number of members of the Association present on that occasion, though he regretted the circumstances which had given rise to the meeting, and especially regretted their occurrence at a time when the Association was about to appeal to the public for pecuniary aid. Whatever, the decision might be that night, it seemed too probable that that appeal would be injured by the present discussion. He was as much in favour of toleration as any man could be; but he felt that the Directors were elected to carry on the business of the Association, according to their best discretion, and that they ought to be supported in their measures by their constituents. The Board felt they were responsible for the effect of their proceedings, and that while prejudices existed in this community, opposed to the reception of this paper, it was necessary that it should be excluded. There was an unconscious mistake, however, in the remarks of the gentleman who moved this resolution. The second Board found the paper excluded, and declined to receive it, believing it not to be for the interests of the Association to do so. He was also mistaken in saying that the first minute for rejecting the resolution was forced through the Board a minute before the Board was dissolved. The first intention was to recommend the following Board to consider the subject, and it was only when the chairman refused to put this vote, because it would embarrass their successors that the minute was adopted.

Mr. MURRAY did not refuse to put the resolution referred to. He merely stated that a recommendation would fetter the succeeding Board.

Mr. McDONALD said he was present at the meeting in question, and in his opinion, Mr. Morris was nearest the truth.

Mr. MORRIS continued—It was an unfortunate mistake that the resolution was sent by the Secretary of the Association to the agent of the newspaper, because it was plain that that might wound the feelings of Mr. Workman. The true question to be decided was, whether it were expedient to take this paper in the interest of the Association—whether it would contribute to the interests of the Institution. He believed it could not conduce to the harmony of the Association. The first religious papers came

into the room when it was joined by the late Religious Library. The question now mooted was not a new one. It had been brought forward on the occasion when the Bible Christian was sought to be introduced; and then, as now, it seemed to be the general, and as he thought the correct opinion, that those papers should be alone selected which were agreeable to the majority.

BENJAMIN WORKMAN, Esquire—Allusion having been made to me by name, by the last speaker, as having taken serious offence at the Board of Direction, I would say that such is not the case. I entertain no harsh feelings, and am ready to extend towards them and towards all my co-corporators in this Association, feelings of kindness, and neighbourly respect and deference, whether they vote with me or against me; and now that I am upon my legs I may say that certain assertions having been made in one of the journals of this city, that it had been stated in the *Inquirer* that if Christ had lived in Boston at the present day—(here Mr. W. was interrupted by expressions of disapprobation)—I merely wished to say Mr. President that I have a file of the paper (the *Inquirer*) here, and will be happy to afford any gentleman an opportunity of verifying the fact.

JOHN YOUNG, Esquire—Mr. President, whichever way this question may be decided—whether for or against the Resolution offered—I shall in either case remain in and stand by the Association, and I trust that every member will come to the same conclusion. Allusion has been made to me as the Founder of the Association, and to its progress. The latter fact is gratifying in the extreme. Ten years ago next November, I put a notice into the newspapers calling on those who were favourable to such an institution to meet at the rooms of the Mechanics Institute. The meeting took place, and consisted of nine persons, three of whom were opposed to the formation of the Association. You see what it has since become. The Association is however only in its infancy. Difficulties have been already overcome, but greater ones are yet before you. Better times, however, are in prospect, and all will be surmounted if you are true to yourselves. The progress of this country and of this city in particular, depends in some measure on the intelligence of its Merchants. The present clerks must, in due time, be the merchants, and as this Association is admirably adapted for affording the means of intellectual improvement, particularly to those who cannot afford to pay for private instruction, there is no friend of the Association but must deeply regret any circumstance which is likely to endanger its existence, or sow disunion among its members. In such an Association as this, there must be a diversity of belief as to religious matters, among its members. The object of the Association is to embrace all in its folds, irrespective of their opinions on politics or religion, and hence any attempt to expel or stigmatize the opinion of any member or members, not only brands the Association as sectarian in its government, but deprives the members so stigmatized of that equal liberty, which the Association was intended to give to all. In this instance the *Christian Inquirer* was received by a Resolution of the Board, and as formally rejected at a later period for its "insidious doctrines." It is this receipt and expulsion of the paper, which gives it a sectarian character, and as one of the proscribed sect, I protest against its injustice. I have no doubt, whatever, that the gentlemen on the Board, who expelled the *Christian Inquirer*, believed that the paper contained unsound doctrines, but I would wish them to understand, that I am equally conscientious, when I state that I believe in the truth of the doctrines therein taught, and I claim equal liberty of conscience, with any member of this Association, and the rejection of the *Christian Inquirer* for its doctrines, strikes, in my opinion, at the very root of religious liberty.

As an Unitarian, I know that I am one of a small minority in this Association, but I cannot and will not believe, that the liberal minded young men of this Association will reject the proposed resolution. This matter through the instrumentality of the press, has obtained a wide circulation, and the eyes of thousands in the United States and elsewhere are upon you as to the vote of this night. It is, however, but little matter to me, whether you decide for freedom this night or not; I believe my view of the matter to be correct, and under this view, should you reject the resolution proposed, I hereby promise that I will through the remainder of my life, at each regular meeting of the Association, until accomplished, offer a resolution to remove what I consider this stain on our Association. It is a mistake to say that any efforts have been made by Unitarians to force this paper into the room. Your records will show that some three years ago, when some one wished the *Bible Christian*, a small paper then published by the Unitarian Society of this city, to be admitted, I opposed its introduction, as well as the admission of any religious papers for I foresaw

they would produce difficulty. Other religious papers have been taken into the rooms and all or none must now be received.

JOHN LEEMING, Esq., said he was happy to hear the determination of all parties, to stand by the Association, whatever might be the result of that night's meeting. The meeting had heard that if the resolution was not carried, it would be brought forward again and again, until what the first speaker called "perfect mental freedom" was obtained. Now he thought that as the Association had got wrong, the sooner it retracted its steps the better, and by so doing it might set itself right. He did not think that the interests of the Society could be advanced by delay and postponement; and there certainly was no shame or reproach in retracing a false step. They had heard from the gentleman who had preceded him that there was a resolution in the books adopted some years ago, to the effect that it was not desirable to take any religious newspaper at all—and therefore he (Mr. L.) thought the best way to throw oil on the troubled waters would be to resolve that at the expiration of the present periods of subscriptions all religious newspapers should be banished from the Rooms of the Association. When he advocated that course he spoke merely for himself; but it did appear to him that the only path of safety and of peace for the interest of the Mercantile Library Association was that which went back to the step where it got wrong—that was where they began to take religious newspapers—by so doing, he believed every thing might be made right. He did not think that taking these religious newspapers was necessary or would eventuate in the benefit of the Association. They were little read. People read or ought to read these religious newspapers at home. This Institution was not established for that purpose. But this he would say that in the case before the meeting, that of excluding the *Christian Inquirer*, a degree of injustice was practised towards the Unitarian members of the Association, and that were he one of them he would take the view they took; that it was unjust to refuse their paper, while others, representing other religious opinions were admitted. He would therefore move an amendment,—

"That taking into consideration the action of the Board in reference to the *Christian Inquirer*, it is the opinion of this meeting that inasmuch as the Association is one of a strictly mercantile character, and not founded for the purpose of propagating religious opinions, that it is necessary for its peace and future welfare that all religious newspapers be now and henceforth refused admittance to its reading room.

H. ALLAN Esq., had come prepared to propose a similar resolution, and the only change he would suggest would be to exclude all religious papers from the present time.

MR. TAYLOR thought the amendment was not in order. The meeting had been convened for a special purpose, to take into consideration the action of the Directors touching the *Inquirer* newspaper, and not to entertain the project of expelling all the religious journals. The rule respecting special meetings was clear enough. The amendment was clearly out of order. Respecting its merits, much could be said on both sides. About four years ago he had made a similar suggestion; but he would feel disposed to oppose their expulsion now.

MR. JOHN LOWE—I rise to order. I consider the amendment of the gentleman, if amendment a motion can be called embodying a subject so entirely different, is out of order, and in violation of the constitution of the Association. [Here the gentleman read from the constitution, to the effect that a special meeting might be called by the President on requisition.] Now, this meeting is a special meeting, and the subject the gentleman desires us to vote upon, is not the subject for which the meeting was called; but it is entirely different, and involves far other considerations. I know that many of our members have joined on account of the religious papers, and they desire to have them.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN—Even if this amendment, Mr. President, were not out of order, which I agree with the last speaker in thinking it to be, I should still oppose it, at the present time; and hope that the gentleman who proposed it will consent to its withdrawal. I conceive it to be unjust towards persons who have come here prepared to deal with the particular question, mentioned in the requisition, and that only, that they should be asked to decide upon this, which is in a measure foreign to it, and which comes upon them unawares. I, for one, am not prepared to vote for or against it, this evening, and I have no doubt that many of those around me are similarly situated; I hope, therefore, that this amendment will be withdrawn. If not, I am decidedly of opinion that it should be rejected as out of order. As I am on my feet, and as allusion has been made to the part I took as a member of the Board of Direction, with

regard to the proceedings complained of, I hope that the members present will excuse me if I trespass upon their time a few minutes, in order to offer an explanation of my conduct.

[Mr. C. here yielded the floor to give the Chair an opportunity to decide the point of order, which was ruled against the amendment.]

MR. LEEMING made a slight verbal alteration in his motion.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN—Does Mr. Leeming mean to insult our intellects, by trying to make us pass that, as in order, which we have declared not to be so, merely by the addition of a few words of form. The amendment was considered out of order, on account of its subject matter, and not of its form, and the words which Mr. L. has inserted in the beginning of it, do not alter its offensive part. Besides, I must continue to oppose the reception of this amendment, upon the grounds which I stated a few minutes ago, that we are not come here prepared to decide the question which it raises. It is, therefore, unfair to press it.

MR. CANTWELL—I believe the motion of Mr. Leeming to be out of order. The principle of that motion is not the principle which we have met here to-night to consider and decide; and, according to the clause of the constitution just quoted, the proposition must be overruled. But if it be not thus disposed of, I am still prepared, upon its merits, to give it all the opposition in my power. No religious papers ought to be excluded from our Rooms, for this reason, if for no other, that they not unfrequently contain the most important disquisitions on semi-political subjects. I do not doubt that there are many members of this Society, who, like myself, would find it highly inconvenient to subscribe for all those sectarian journals which they might find it necessary to read. The object of this Institution is plainly to prevent such inconveniences. Let free admission, therefore, be conceded to the organs of all varieties of political and religious opinions; and let us by the vote we are about to give, declare our given determination to maintain inviolate the principles of perfect toleration.

MR. J. J. DAY considered that it was shirking the question for which he had met; a course which he considered unfair to the Unitarians.

MR. JOHN YOUNG thought it was out of order, and read from the constitution the paragraph read by Mr. Lowe.

The PRESIDENT ruled the amendment out of order.

M. J. BOYD—Mr. President, in justice to myself, and a number of the Members of the Board of Direction, I wish to say a few words in explanation of the course adopted by me when I voted at the meeting of the Board of Direction "not to receive the *Christian Inquirer* into the rooms, on the ground of expediency." The members of the Board now present must remember at the first meeting of the new Board, the question regarding the expulsion of the *Christian Inquirer* came before them for action. After a great deal of discussion, it was moved by Mr. Chamberlin and seconded by myself, and carried by a majority.* That the "*Christian Inquirer*" be received and placed upon the tables of the Mercantile Library Association.—The principle upon which I voted was this,—the Mercantile Library Association is not a religious Institution, merely a commercial and literary one, consequently the various religious papers received, cannot be received except in accordance with the wishes of the members of the Association. Therefore, as the Unitarian Members of the Association require the reception of their paper, they have a right to have their request granted. Immediately after the motion alluded to was carried, the propriety of putting out all the religious papers was discussed; this question with the motion were laid on the table for further consideration at the next meeting of the Board. At the next meeting of the Board the discussion of this question was resumed. I advocated the principle of toleration as forcibly as I could, I was thoroughly opposed to the rejection of the *Christian Inquirer* as I held that its rejection would be unjust. I come now to explain how it was that I gave my vote not to receive it. It was represented upon good authority (authority such I could, and cannot doubt) that if the paper were received some thirty members were prepared to leave the Association. It was ascertained from the canvassing of the Directors for subscriptions that six or seven Unitarian members would leave if the paper was not received. Now, I ask the members of the Association how was I to act in such case? I reasoned with myself thus "here is a paper" will its reception benefit or injure the interests of the Association, on one hand I find thirty members prepared to leave if it is received, on the other hand six or seven if it is not received, keeping strictly in view the interests of the Association,

* There is no record of this resolution on the Minute Book.

I could on the ground of expediency (and without the violation of any principle) vote not to receive the paper.

Gentlemen, I am not a sectarian or bigoted, I advocate "Free and Religious Liberty" as much as the gentleman who has opened the proceedings this evening. I am not an Unitarian, I am not a Roman Catholic, neither am I a Church of England man, I am a Dissenter, but I wish the Unitarians to enjoy the same privileges as myself, consequently, I voted against the *Christian Inquirer*, not because it was an Unitarian paper, but simply on the ground that its reception would not better the Association. It appears to me that the wording of the resolution proposed by the gentleman (Mr. Taylor) that he impugns the principle and motive upon which the new Board had acted, he wants to make the present Board responsible for the conduct of last years Board. This I cannot admit, for I have and do now denounce the resolution passed by the old Board, I have never agreed to it. I think he has put the saddle upon the wrong horse. For the present Board are not responsible for the action of last years Board.

I think, gentlemen, the better course would be (and one as regards myself and which I should like the best) to approve of the principle of expediency, upon which the present Board have acted, and then propose a resolution to have the paper received, and if the majority of the meeting are in favor of its reception, I pledge myself that I am prepared to bring in motion after motion before the Board at every meeting until the paper be received,—this I am convinced is the proper course. We, the Directors have a right to keep in view, in every matter the interests of the Association, we have a right to consult the wishes of the members, and thus fulfil that for which we have been put into office. I therefore trust that the members of the Association will decide this evening, that the Directors have acted conscientiously, not in a bigoted or sectarian manner. I conclude by again repeating, that I never voted against the *Christian Inquirer*, because it was a Unitarian paper, but because its reception would injure (at the time I voted) the interests of the Association.

W. C. EVANS, Esq.—In rising upon the present occasion I cannot say that I feel the same pleasure that some of the speakers who have preceded me give expression to, because, I am aware, that my ability in this respect will not enable me to give the subject that justice which it merits; but, I cannot allow the question to be taken or the mover in this evening's business to reply to what has been advanced against him, without setting him right in regard to some of his facts—such of them as have come under my own knowledge. The gentleman stated that the paper had been originally received by the deliberate opinion of the board: now the fact was it had been received only by the casting vote of the Chairman, at a meeting called an hour before the usual time. He (Mr. Taylor) further stated, that the resolutions prohibitory of the paper were passed by a bare majority of a fractional part of the Board of Direction. Now, how stands the facts; at the meeting where the reception of the paper was decided upon there were eight members and the Chairman present, and at the meeting expelling it there were just the same number, with one additional member who did away with the necessity of the chairman's giving his vote upon the matter; and, at the subsequent meeting when the question was again brought up, its reception was deemed inexpedient by a vote of 10 to 2—the chairman and another member not voting. This certainly does not look like carrying the measure by a fractional portion of the Board. He also endeavoured to lower the Association in the eyes of the public by contrasting it with sister institutions in the United States. He said that the Cincinnati Association was much more liberal than the Association of Montreal, because they had given praise to an Unitarian minister. But it appeared that the Montreal Association were not behind the others in liberality, since their reports showed that they likewise had bestowed praise on Unitarians. The gentleman whom the last annual report of this institution, eulogised, is an Unitarian. He deserved the eulogy and we gave it to him. The gentleman who had moved the resolution would lead the meeting to believe that he knew the hearts of the entire community; yet he wanted to make it appear in another part of his speech that there had been a great deal of secrecy. Now one of those two things must be wrong, there was an inconsistency between them. He (Mr. Taylor) tells us of all that happened at the meetings of the Board of Directors, which suited his purpose, and withholds that which does not, displaying a deficiency either in knowledge or candour. I must say that I feel pleasure in being permitted here to give reasons that influenced my conduct at the Board of Direction. I think it is a good plan for the members to ask for an explanation, when the conduct of the Directors is such as to call for it, for if all was right then our ex-

planation would do away with any ill-feeling that might exist, and if all was not right then suitable instruction could be given by the members unitedly that would make it satisfactory if not to all at least to the majority, and release the Board of any responsibility they might feel. I am perfectly willing that the majority should rule. I am, further, of the opinion that the views of a minority should not be wholly disregarded. I am also, notwithstanding all the odium that that gentleman would attach to it, and he has deprecated it in very strong language I am one of those who are to a certain extent governed by expediency, and I will show in explanation how my conduct was based on that ground from the first, though I admit my feelings of opposition to the *Christian Inquirer* were as strong as those of any man could be. At the time when the last annual report was read for my approval, I suggested that its reception should not be mentioned in the report, because I feared that it would disturb the harmonious working of the Association; and this suggestion was carried unanimously. After this at a subsequent meeting of the Board at which I was not present, it was thought that as they were ashamed to acknowledge its reception, they had better not receive it, and it was decided accordingly. As the question really stood, it amounted to this, whether one, two, or half a dozen members should force on the rest of the Association a paper they did not want. The Board thought not; the Board had been elected on account of their past character for good management in other affairs, and in order that they should use their best discretion in the management of the affairs of this institution. They were all Trinitarians; and if Unitarian papers were wanted, some Unitarians would have been, he supposed, placed among them.* I would repeat it is a question whether one or two shall rule the Board as they please, or whether the Board shall rule for the interest of the Society for the year they are elected. If the Directors conduct does not please the members the remedy in their own hands, let them not re-elect, let them put others in power. I for one am quite willing to make way for one more pleasing to the majority, if my past conduct be displeasing. But I cannot sit down without urging upon all the necessity of union, and in doing so I would, without hesitation, state my intention of continuing a member of the Association without any reference to the decision that may be arrived at this evening, because I am firmly of the opinion that this institution may be made a very powerful instrument for good or for evil. I will endeavour to do by it as much good I can, and in furthering that endeavour will keep to the Association so long as they keep together.

Mr. JOHN LOWE rose amidst interruptions. He said, it is my intention, Mr. President, to maintain the floor. I have a few words to say, and mean to say them; and I am sure that gentlemen will not facilitate business by interrupting me. It is not my intention to detain the meeting many minutes, as I do not believe that any eloquence at 20 minutes past ten o'clock at night in this hot room will change the opinions of gentlemen on a subject so exciting as the present. I do not however say that if I could bring into the field such eloquence as that my friend Mr. Winn gave us a specimen of, and which I am sorry was not enlisted on the other side, that I should not be tempted to detain gentlemen a little. Some gentlemen have been at great pains to discuss and excuse the conduct of the present board, and also that of its predecessor. I cannot but think such discussion irrelevant to the issue on which we are assembled to decide this evening. It has been stated that no offence is meant to the board. I mean none, nor do I want to discuss its conduct. It is enough that I say, I have confidence in the gentlemen who compose it. A different issue has now arisen, and we the supreme legislators have met to decide it. I think it is of no use talking about the right we have to turn out a paper. We can turn out any or all the papers we have, there is no doubt about that, and there is no use of taking up time to discuss it. The question is if we now exclude the paper in question, as it is asked to be admitted, and in the manner in which it is asked to be admitted, shall we not give our Institution a sectarian character? I believe that we shall, and on this principle I shall vote against the exclusion of the paper, and I trust that the majority of gentlemen here will support the same principle. I think that any thing which would have the effect of giving our Institution a sectarian character would be very much to be deplored. I believe it to be unsectarian in its foundation, and that its objects are wide, and the reverse of sectarian. The only ground on which I can see that a paper can be proscribed in the manner that the one in question is sought to be, is on that of infidelity or immorality.

* One Unitarian, a merchant, of this city, was elected by the Directors as an honorary member of the Board, but he was not present at any of its meetings when this subject was under consideration.

It is of no use to talk about tendencies on one side or the other. We must have palpable infidelity or immorality. I have heard no charges against the paper that some gentlemen, wish to proscribe. I am not an Unitarian, but I do not believe, that Unitarians are infidels. I hope, gentlemen, by their votes will not violate those wide principles on which our Institution was founded, and as an old member of the Association, and office bearer, I would implore them to pause before giving a vote that will attach to it a sectarian character.

HENRY LYMAN, Esq., said, that he would venture to make a few remarks upon the question before the Chair, principally to explain why he had thought it his duty to call the gentlemen who had introduced the business of the meeting to order. He did so, because he thought that he was wandering from the point, in the reference he made to the Association at Cincinnati. He was extremely desirous of allowing every possible latitude to that gentleman, so long as he kept to the point; but he was not willing to allow him to extend his peregrinations indefinitely; especially when those remarks did not touch the precise point at issue. Much had been said about the *expulsion of the Christian Inquirer* from the Reading Room, and the terms bigotry, intolerance and proscription were freely used; this was a matter of course, and to be expected, especially when a particular impression was to be made; but he thought that the matter would resolve itself into a very simple point upon examination. When divested of all extraneous circumstance, it would be found that the paper had been received temporarily, and afterwards declined. The terms, in which the decision of the Board of Directors was conveyed, were offensive. It appeared that on all hands this point was conceded, and the Board were ready to make the most ample apology. So far there was little or no diversity of sentiment, but that was not sufficient to satisfy the requisitionists; they insist upon the reception of that paper and nothing short. Now he did not think this was reasonable, considering that had the paper been taken and paid for, as other papers, and subsequently discontinued, no one would consider himself entitled to complain. There was only one other point to which he would direct their attention, it was to the allusion made by the first speaker to the benefactions of Unitarian gentlemen. He did not mean in the slightest manner to disparage their liberality, but it had been said with emphasis, in effect that the Association were willing enough to receive their money, but at the same time did not scruple to proscribe their religious sentiments. He did not believe the statement to be a fair one. He believed the things were entirely dissimilar; it was one thing to receive a gentleman's money for a purely secular or mercantile object, and quite another to endorse his religious belief. He did not think the statement a fair one, as relating to those gentlemen he did not believe that they offered their money with the view to the introduction of their peculiar views in matters of religion. Pecuniary contributions under such circumstances might be too dearly purchased. He might extend his remarks to much greater length did the lateness of the hour permit, but as he believed enough had been said, he would not further occupy their time.

MR. TAYLOR—I have promised to detain you not above five minutes and I will redeem the pledge, but this will oblige me to pass over several points which I would like to notice. I shall first grapple with the ingenious and eloquent speech of my friend Mr. Winn. He said that the resolution expelling the *Inquirer* was not intended to be made public, and has cast censure on the Secretary who communicated it to Mr. Workman. "Not intended for publication"—was this thing done in a corner? Has the Board of the Mercantile Library Association passed a resolution of which they are ashamed? Under the circumstances, the reflection cast upon the Secretary who has resigned his membership and is not in a position to defend himself—under these circumstances, the reflections are contemptible and unjust. I was for several years Secretary to this Association and I have been Secretary to kindred Societies, and if I understand the duties of a Secretary, it is his business to conduct the correspondence, and communicate resolutions without instructions. The Resolution was a reply to Mr. Workman's letter and the Secretary only did his duty in communicating it to that gentleman. (A voice—He was not the Corresponding Secretary.) I am aware of that, but by the Rules and Regulations, the Recording Secretary is to do the duties of the Corresponding Secretary in his absence, and in this case he had been absent for some time, and his duties had been performed by the Recording Secretary, who was right in communicating the resolution.

MR. MORRIS ROSE—He had been Secretary to many Societies, and it was the invariable practice to instruct the Secretary to communicate resolutions when it was intended to promulgate them.

Mr. TAYLOR—I do not so comprehend the duties of the office, but in this case the resolution was a reply. The point, however, is trifling, and I will not dwell upon it, but I would ask again if this thing was done in a corner? Were the Directors ashamed of what they had done? It would seem so. "It was drawn up hastily"—why it had been before the Board three several times and twice voted down. There was no haste in drawing it up. I understood Mr. Winn to object to the *Inquirer* because it was a foreign paper; and he intimated that we took only local religious papers. He kept back that we pay large sums for several English Religious Journals. It has been said too, that this paper is more calculated to stir up strife than a local religious journal. I hold to the very contrary. The questions treated of in the *Inquirer* are general questions, and do not move that local and partisan feeling which the *Church* and *Witness* excite. It is pleasant to read the thoughts of a writer who generalizes—there is nothing particularly exciting in it—but local questions are irritating and engender bad feeling. The meeting has been told by some of the speakers that if my resolution is adopted, the destruction of the Association may be looked upon as *un fait accompli*. From whom did these threats proceed? Not from the tolerants—we are going to stand by the Association—we cannot be driven out of it. Are the gentlemen sincere in their threats? Do you (to Mr. Roe) do you (to Mr. Winn) intend to desert the institution if you are beaten? If not, why do you regard your neighbours as more intolerant and illiberal than yourselves? You should have greater confidence in your friends. One speaker has asserted that all the Religious journals came into the Room when the junction was formed between the Association and the Religious News Room, and contends, therefore, that we are bound to receive only those papers. The statement is incorrect. Religious journals have been taken by the Association since its foundation. I am an older member than the gentleman who makes this assertion, and I appeal to you Mr. President, in support of the correctness of my statement.

All of the speeches in defence, have put this expulsion on the ground of expediency. I must repeat that is never expedient to be unjust. Expediency! it is the excuse invariably offered for injustice. Expediency! from the young mercantile men of Montreal. I am horrified to hear them speak of expediency. What will they become when the world has worn off the generous enthusiasm of youth? when they are old and hardened? Expediency from old and effete men, from political hacks is natural enough, but it sounds strange indeed in the mouths of the young and intelligent men of Montreal. Expediency! let us repudiate it altogether. Let us shew that we have confidence in the immutable principles of eternal justice. Let us shew that we appreciate the beautiful and complete system of morals taught in the Book of Life, in which we all believe. Let us "do unto others, as we would be done by," and shew that our reading of the Testament has not been fruitless. The amendment offered to my resolution tenders an apology, makes sundry excuses, but it leaves the injustice untouched—it sanctions it on the miserable ground of expediency. Shall we sanction the proscription of any respectable class of our citizens. Those in favor of equal rights will vote against the amendment and for my resolution.

The motion of amendment was then put, 71 voting for it, 70 against it. Messrs. Young and Leeming, scrutineers, had not voted. Mr. L. would rather not do so, but pair off. Mr. Y. would decidedly vote. Mr. L. then voted for the amendment, Mr. Y. against it. Loud cheering here arose from the majority, and confusion followed.

Several members called upon the President to put the original motion as amended. The confusion increased. Mr. Taylor thought they had been fairly beaten, the amendment was a substantive motion. The President amid shouts for the amended motion, and much confusion, declared the meeting adjourned.

Mr. LEEMING gave notice that at the Semi-Annual Meeting in May he would move the expulsion of all the religious journals from the News Room.